What is the Yardstick for Identifying a Wali? Can a person who is not particular about following the Shari'ah be a Wali? If such a person performs an extraordinary feat, will it be regarded as a Karaamat?

A Bapoo (false saint) has recently appeared in Khayraalo (in Gujarat, India). He claims that his breath can reach a mile away and that this will cause water filled in any bottle within a mile's radius to become a cure for diseases. I have also heard that many people have already been cured. People regard him to be a Wali (saint) and believe that his breath is a *Karaamat* (miracle). As a result, people flock to him and the mixed crowds of men and women are so great that people even miss their salaah.

The Bapoo is neither particular about his salaah, nor about performing salaah in Jamaa'ah. He does not follow the Sunnah, does not have a beard and even shakes hands with strange women. In fact, he does not even stop people from prostrating before him. Can he be a Wali and can his breath be a *Karaamat*?

NOTE: The above question condenses several queries from the people of Aalipor, Laajpor, Surat and other areas.

Answer: This is an age of trials. May Allaah protect us all. In fact, even Peeraane Peer used to make du'aa saying, "This is the end of times. O Allaah! We seek Your refuge from evil."[1]

A Hadith of *Jam'ul Jawaami* states that at the end of time, Shaytaan will appear in the form of saints and mislead people. All the signs of Qiyaamah that are to appear between the demise of Rasulullaah ρ and the appearance of Hadhrat Mahdi are regarded as the minor signs, while those to come between the appearance of Hadhrat Mahdi and the blowing of the trumpet are regarded as the major signs.

The Imaan and conviction of Muslims are already at such a low ebb that they call Allaah and other "gods" in the same breath. They will therefore sacrifice their Jumu'ah salaah and salaah with Jamaa'ah merely because they have become infatuated with the breath of the Bapoo. They even make themselves targets of Allaah's curse by being immodest and violating the laws of Hijaab. If this is their condition while only the minor signs have appeared, what will be their condition when Dajjaal appears and carries out some most extraordinary feats? When such people are taken aback by the Bapoo's breath, what will happen when Dajjaal will bring people back to life and will have with him a Jannah and Jahannam, entering his followers into his Jannah and throwing his opponents into his Jahannam? He will provide grain and rain for his followers during droughts and buried treasures will all be at his disposal. How will people with such weak Imaan save themselves at such a time?

The discussion here is not about receiving treatment through the verses of the Qur'aan, the names of Allaah and the use of amulets and incantations that are free from words of Kufr and Shirk. Rasulullaah ρ mentioned that Allaah has sent a cure for every disease.[2] Rasulullaah ρ also permitted the reciting of incantations to treat cataract, sores, bites and other conditions.

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[1] *Malfoozaat* (Pg.665).
[2] *Mishkaatul Masaabeeh* (Pg.387), reporting from Bukhaari and Muslim.

Hadhrat Auf bin Maalik τ reports that they used to recite certain incantations during the Period of Ignorance so after accepting Islaam, they asked Rasulullaah ρ about it. Rasulullaah ρ asked them to recite the incantations to him and remarked that there was no harm in reciting them as long as they contained no words of Shirk.[3]

The discussion here is rather about hundreds of thousands of people benefiting from a single breath and that water within a mile's radius can receive curative properties by it. This cannot be true and is just a figment of imagination, which weakens and ruins one's conviction in Allaah. If we assume that it really happens, it will be regarded as something extraordinary. In terms of the Shari'ah, when an extraordinary feat is carried out by a Nabi υ, it is called a *Mu'jizah*. During the Battle of Badr, Rasulullaah ρ took some sand in his hand and threw it at the Mushrikeen army, saying, "May your faces be disfigured!" The sand then reached the eyes of every Mushrik soldier, because of which he had to rub them. It was then that the Sahabah ψ attacked them. Referring to this in the Qur'aan, Allaah says: "***You (O Rasulullaah ρ) did not throw when you threw, but it was (actually) Allaah Who threw."***

However, if such an extraordinary feat is carried out by a Wali of Allaah, it is called a *Karaamat*. Furthermore, if an extraordinary feat is carried out by a sinner, it will be called *Istidraaj* (a plot of Shaytaan).

The Bapoo in question is not particular about salaah, let alone salaah with Jamaa'ah. Furthermore, because he does not even have a beard (which was the hallmark of all the Ambiyaa عليهم السلام), he falls in the category of a flagrant sinner. Such a person cannot be a Wali and it therefore follows that any extraordinary feat he carries out will not be a *Karaamat* but *Istidraaj*. It is a ploy from Shaytaan, an act from the underworld and black magic. In the interests of safeguarding one's Imaan, it will not be permissible to consult him or to regard the water he blows on as blessed.

Hadhrat Sheikh Abdul Haqq Haqqaani رحمه الله (author of Tafseer Haqqaani) writes: "The general populace are unable to differentiate between *Karaamat* and *Istidraaj*. For this reason, they will easily become devotees of open sinners who do not perform salaah and who are habitual alcoholics merely because they see them doing something extraordinary. They regard such a sinner to be a Wali and his feat to be a *Karaamat*. They fail to understand that a Wali is someone on a rank above that of a pious Mu'min. By this I mean that when a pious Mu'min truly recognises the qualities of Allaah, he forsakes luxuries and remains engrossed in Ibaadah. His devotion to Allaah then draws him to Allaah's court and he becomes enlisted as a special servant of Allaah. It is only when an extraordinary feat takes place at the hand of such a person that it is termed a *Karaamat* and he is regarded as a Wali. An extraordinary feat taking place at the hand of one who is just a pious Mu'min will not be called a Karaamat, neither will this qualify him to be called a Wali. As for the person who is not at all a pious Mu'min, who perpetrates major sins and who may not be a Mu'min at all, his extraordinary feat is not a *Karaamat* but a ploy of Shaytaan, which is termed *Istidraaj*, as mentioned above."[4]

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[3] *Mishkaatul Masaabeeh* (Pg.388), reporting from Muslim.
[4] *Aqaa'ide Islaam* Pgs. 153,154.

The accepted servants of Allaah Y are those who have truly recognised the Being and qualities of Allaah Y, who obey Him and who are particular about Ibaadah. They meticulously follow the Sunnah, abstain from sin, forbidden acts and even doubtful acts. Such pure souls can be termed the Auliyaa of Allaah.

Hadhrat Abu Hafs Kabeer Haddaad said, "The person who does not weigh his words and deeds on the scale of the Qur'aan and Sunnah of Rasulullaah ρ and who does not regard carnal desires as evil can never join the ranks of Allaah's pious and chosen servants."[5]

Aarif Billaah Hadhrat Bayazeed Bistaami رحمه الله says, "When you see someone doing something extraordinary such as flying, sitting cross-legged in the air or walking on water, you should never pay any attention to him if he is not particular about following the Qur'aan and Sunnah of Rasulullaah ρ."[6]

Hadhrat Junayd Baghdadi رحمه الله said, "All roads leading to Allaah are sealed from the one who does not follow the footsteps of Rasulullaah ρ."[7]

Hadhrat Abu Abdullaah Haarith bin Asadi Muhaasibi رحمه الله says, "The person whose inner self had been corrected by meditation and sincerity will have Allaah beautify his outer self with exertion (in Ibaadah) and being a strict adherent to the Sunnah."[8]

Hadhrat Abu Sa'eed Kharraaz رحمه الله says that every exterior appearance that conflicts with the interior condition is useless.[9]

Hadhrat Dhun Noon Misri رحمه الله said, "Amongst the signs of a person's love for Allaah is following the character, deeds, commands and ways of life of Allaah's beloved (Rasulullaah ρ)."[10]

When Hadhrat Bayazeed Bistaami رحمه الله heard about a famous saint, he went to meet him. It so happened that the man was on his way to Masjid and spat in the direction of the Qibla. Seeing this, Hadhrat Bayazeed Bistaami رحمه الله returned without meeting the man and said, "How can a person be regarded as a saint when he cannot be trusted to uphold the etiquette of Rasulullaah ρ?"[11]

Peeraane Peer Hadhrat Abdul Qaadir Jaylaani رحمه الله said, "Everything that conflicts with the Shari'ah is falsehood."[12]

Allaah says, "***And forsake all apparent and secret sins***". This means that all sins related to the exterior limbs should be forsaken, which include the ears, eyes, nose, tongue, hands, etc. The sins related to the inner self are those to do with the heart and passions.[13]

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[5] Persian *Al Balaaghul Mubeen* Pg.46.
[6] Persian *Al Balaaghul Mubeen* Pg.46 and *Risaalah Qushayriyyah* Pg. 15.
[7] *Risaalah Qushayriyyah* Pg. 20 and Persian *Al Balaaghul Mubeen* Pg.46.
[8] *Risaalah Qushayriyyah* Pg. 13 and Persian *Al Balaaghul Mubeen* Pg.46.
[9] *Risaalah Qushayriyyah* Pg. 24 and Persian *Al Balaaghul Mubeen* Pg.45.
[10] *Risaalah Qushayriyyah* Pg. 9.
[11] *Risaalah Qushayriyyah* Pg. 15.
[12] *Al Balaaghul Mubeen* Pg.45.
[13] Urdu *Tafseer Mazhari* (Vol.4 Pg.204).

The condition of the inner self definitely has an effect on the outer self because the two have such a strong relationship that the reformation of one affects the reformation of the other and the ruin of one has a bearing on the ruin of the other.

Imaam Rabbani Hadhrat Mujaddid Alf Thaani رحمه الله writes, "Claiming that one's heart is sound is a fallacy without carrying out good deeds externally. Just as it is impossible for a body to live without a soul in this world, the spiritual well-being of the body is impossible without good deeds. Nowadays there are many who lay this claim (that their inner self is in excellent spiritual shape even though there are no external good deeds to prove it). May Allaah save us from such irreligious beliefs through the intervention of His Rasool ρ."[14]

A person who is not particular about following the injunctions of the Shari'ah and the Sunnah can never be a Wali (friend of Allaah) and any extraordinary feat he carries out is an act of magic and Istidraaj. In fact, through spiritual exercises and exertion, some people manage to accomplish such feats even without being Muslim. Haafidh Ibn Hajar رحمه الله reports an incident of a Soofi who once debated with a Brahmin. The Brahmin actually flew into the air in full view of everyone watching.[15]

When someone once mentioned to Hadhrat Abu Yazeed Bistaami رحمه الله that another person travelled to Makkah in a single night, the Sheikh remarked, "And Shaytaan travels from the east to the west in the blinking of an eye even though he is cursed by Allaah (the man's feat therefore tells nothing of his spiritual status)."[16]

Imaam Rabbani Hadhrat Mujaddid Alf Thaani رحمه الله says that when a person is lax in fulfilling the injunctions of the Shari'ah, he will be deprived of Allaah's recognition. All that he thinks (and does) will amount to nothing and will merely be a ploy of Shaytaan and he will be just like Hindu ascetics and Brahmins.[17]

The spiritual mentor of thousands of Muslims in Gujarat - especially in Surat – Hadhrat Moulana Shah Muhammad Hidaayat Ali Nakhshbandi Mujaddidi Jeepuri رحمه الله stated, "Only that person can be a person of Taqwa and a Wali who follows the Sunnah of Rasulullaah ρ both externally and internally. As for the one who does not follow Rasulullaah ρ, he can never be a Wali regardless of anything else. Sheikh Sa'di رحمه الله says, 'The one who takes a road other than that of Rasulullaah ρ will never reach the destination.'"

The majority today behave in a manner that opposes the Shari'ah. They do not perform salaah, perform it haphazardly, fold, shave or trim their beards, allow their moustaches to grow long, hang their garments beneath their ankles, etc. according to all four Imaams of Shari'ah and Tasawwuf, such people are termed as Faasiq (flagrant sinners). A Hadith states that praising a Faasiq causes the Arsh of Allaah to shake and the Qur'aan states that Allaah does not guide those who are Faasiq. However we see that ignorant people regard such a Faasiq be a Wali and the Faasiq hears people calling him a Wali and remains silent about it. In fact, some ignorant people claim that their Peer performs his salaahs in Makkah and therefore has no need to perform salaah where he lives.

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[14] *Maktoobaat Imaam Rabbaani* (Vol.1 Pg.53,54).
[15] Arabic *Al Basaa'ir* Pg. 412.
[16] *Al Basaa'ir* Pg. 412.
[17] Urdu *Maktoobaat Imaam Rabbaani* (Vol.2 Pg.181).

Dear brother! You should not pledge allegiance to such a Faasiq whom Allaah has not made His friend. Do not sit in his company because you will be harmed and receive no benefit. Moulana Rumi رحمه الله said, "The hand of an imperfect person is the hand of Shaytaan because only deceit and harm can come from him." Stay aloof from such a person even though he may enact supernatural feats such as telling you what is in your heart, casting an effect on your heart, informing you where lost things are, disappearing, becoming a lion, flying in the air, etc. These acts are termed as *Istidraaj* in the Shari'ah and are acts of Shaytaan that were even practised by Hindu ascetics and Brahmins as well as the Greek philosophers. If such acts are a sign of being a Wali, then even Shaytaan and the Kuffaar will have to be referred to as Auliyaa. Being a Wali entails being close to the truth, having perfect conviction, extreme love for Rasulullaah ρ and following him in everything. Hadhrat Moulana Rumi رحمه الله stated how to recognise the genuine from the phonies. He said:

1. "Many Shayaateen appear in the guise of men, so never give your hand (pledge allegiance) to anyone without verifying.
2. Whatever he speaks about his inspiration, then hit the shoe of his inspiration over his head
3. We have come to remain firm upon following the injunctions of the Shari'ah and not for matters of inspiration and miracles."

Hadhrat Khwaja Muhammad Ma'soom رحمه الله advised that people stay very far from those who practice Bid'ah and whose actions oppose the Sunnah. In fact, he advised that one does not even live in the same town as such a person because one may eventually turn to him and one's beliefs will be corrupted. He says one should run from him as one flees from a lion even though the person may display extraordinary feats and appear to have no concern for this world. The purpose of Shari'ah, Tareeqah and Haqeeqah are all to secure salvation for a person. The first rung on this ladder is following the Shari'ah and doing so with sincerity is where Tareeqah comes in. Salvation will not be attained through the spiritual ecstasy, words and inspiration of some person. Of course, the extraordinary feats, spiritual ecstasy and inspiration of a person of Taqwa is a light and *Karaamat*. The same coming from a person whose actions oppose the Shari'ah will be termed *Istidraaj*.[18]

Sheikh Abu Nasr Moosa رحمه الله reports that his father Hadhrat Sheikh Abdul Qaadir Jaylaani رحمه الله related, "I once stayed awhile in a deserted forest. One day, I became extremely thirsty and despite searching for water, I could find none. Just then, a cloud appeared and some raindrops stared to fall, which gave me some comfort. However, a light then beamed from the cloud, which illuminated the entire sky. A most remarkable apparition then took shape that addressed me with the message: 'O Abdul Qaadir! I am your Rabb and am making all Haraam things Halaal for you. You may therefore do as you please because you will not be questioned.' I immediately said, "أَعُوْذُ بِللَّهِ مِنْ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيْمِ" ('I seek Allaah's protection from the accursed Shaytaan'). Accursed Shaytaan! Get away from here! What nonsense are you talking?!' As soon as I recited أَعُوْذُ بِللَّهِ مِنْ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيْمِ , the light turned to darkness, the apparition disappeared and a voice said, 'O Abdul Qaadir! It is because of your knowledge of the Shari'ah, your insight, your Taqwa and the fact that you are a wise and pious scholar that has saved you from me. I have already misled seventy ascetic worshippers and Sufis at this very place.'

[18] *Mi'yaarus Sulook wa Daafi'ul Awhaam wash Shukook* Pgs.29,32,33.